

HEALTH ISSUES

Supervision and Safety

Handout: "Child Proofing" your home

Children bring joy to their parents - they also bring a few new challenges. Making your home a safe place for your child's normal curiosity and exploration is easy if you follow some relatively simple guidelines.

IN LIVING AREAS AND AROUND THE HOUSE

- Never allows children to play with electrical outlets or appliances. When not in use, cover with plastic outlet covers.
- Keep matches and lighters in a secure place. A child's curiosity about fire can be destructive.
- Alcohol can cause a fatal drop in a child's blood sugar. Be sure to clean up any bottles, glasses, or other containers of alcoholic beverages.
- Firearms, if kept in the home at all, must be locked away somewhere inaccessible to children. Be sure children do not know where keys are (or combination to locks). Even if it is locked away, never store a loaded gun.
- A toddler on a chair can pull top-heavy furniture over. Be sure to place heavier items in the bottom drawers or shelves.
- Pole lamps are also easy targets. Block them with heavy furniture or eliminate them from your home.
- Heating grates can cause burns. Surround them with child gates.
- Be sure all doors to the outside lock securely and are out of your child's reach. A safety chain placed high on the door works well.
- If you have a pool, be sure it has a six foot fence surrounding it. Do not use cyclone fencing for a pool enclosure - it is easily climbed. Be sure children are supervised when swimming.

"Child Proofing" your home (Continued)

TOYS

- Check your children's toys. Those designed for smaller children have fewer, larger pieces and pose less of a choking danger.
- Balloons, whether filled with air, helium, or water are lots of fun. They can also be deadly. Never allow children to play with balloons unsupervised.

IN THE KITCHEN

- Keep all cleaning materials and medicines locked securely away from children.
- Be sure to affix current poison control center stickers to all telephones and keep ipecac on hand to use when directed to do so by the poison control center.

IN THE BEDROOM

- Tie bumper pads tightly to crib and trim ties to prevent choking.
- Limit the number of stuffed toys in your child's crib. Toddlers in particular will step on them and climb out of their cribs.

IN THE BATHROOM

- Remove razors, shampoo and other bath items from the tub area to avoid injury.
- Setting the water heater no higher than 120⁰ F will minimize the risk of burns.
- Always check the water temperature before placing a child in the tub.
- Be sure to keep any medicine, vitamins or cleaning agents in a securely locked cupboard that is not accessible to children.

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Fill in and cut out the following card. Place it near your phone in case of emergency.

EMERGENCY NUMBERS	
Your Name: _____	
Your Address: _____	
Doctor's Name _____	Fire _____
Doctor's Telephone _____	Ambulance _____
Poison Control Center <u>1-800-342-9293</u>	Police _____

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Ways to Prevent Poisonings

Teacher Notes

1. Have the students discuss personal experiences with poisons or answer the following questions:
 - Have you ever known anyone who has been poisoned or who has been taken to the doctor for a possible poisoning?
 - What was the poisonous substance?
 - How did it happen?
 - How old was the person?
 - What was done for the person?
 - How could the poisoning have been prevented?
2. Have the students complete the "Poisonous Substance Home Survey" in this activity. (A poison is any substance that you eat, breathe, or touch that can make you sick or cause death.)
3. Discuss the survey results with students. As a class do the following:
 - a. Compile a list of the ten most common locations for hazardous substances.
 - b. Compile a list of at least five ways people can protect children from hazardous substances.
4. Have each student use a telephone book to determine whom to call in case of a poisoning. Have each student explain what he or she would do. In California, the emergency section of the telephone book lists the telephone numbers of the local poison center or fire rescue squad to call in case of an emergency. For more information, contact your local poison control center. What do you do in your community?

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Poisonous Plants

Apricot – Seed pit, stems, bark
Azaleas – All parts
Calla lily – Bulbs
Castor beans* – Mature seeds
Crocus – Leaves
Daffodil – Bulbs
Dieffenbachia – All parts
English ivy – Berries and leaves
Foxglove – Leaves Iris – Leaves and rhizomes
Hemlock – All parts
Holly-Berries
Horse chestnut (buckeye) – Nuts
Hyacinth – Bulbs, leaves, flowers
Hydrangea – Leaves and bulbs
Lantana (red sage) – Berries
Larkspur or delphinium-
Seeds and young plants

Laurels – All parts
Lily of the valley – Leaves
and flowers
Mistletoe – Berries
Morning glory – Seeds
Narcissus – Bulbs
Nightshade – Berries
Oleander* – All parts,
including dried leaves
Philodendron – All parts
Potato sprouts – Sprouts
Privet – Berries and leaves
Poinsettia – Leaves and flowers
Rhubarb – Leaves
Rhododendron – All parts
Sweet pea – Peas or seeds
Toadstools – All parts
Tulip – Bulbs
Wisteria – Seeds
Even the smoke from burning
brush affects some people

*One of the two most violently poisonous
plants found in California.

Although eating or being exposed to poisonous plants rarely causes death, a serious reaction may occur and require a child to be hospitalized. The degree of poisoning depends on the size of the child, the amount of the plant eaten, and the toxicity of the plant.

Because small children—with their curiosity and tendency to put things into their mouths—are the most common victims of poisonous plants, every effort should be made to teach them not to eat any plant parts (leaves, berries, seeds, or flowers) other than those fed to them as vegetables or fruits.

Castor bean and oleander are the two most violently toxic of the common garden plants found in California.

Castor bean is widely used throughout the state as an ornamental shrub and in some areas is grown by farmers for the oil in the seeds. It also grows wild along roads and stream beds in the warm sections of the state.

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Poisonous Plants (Continued)

The poisonous material called ricin is contained in the fleshy part of the mature seed. Eating small quantities of ricin can produce serious results. The symptoms produced include a burning sensation in the mouth, nausea, vomiting, abdominal pain, blurred vision, dizziness, and convulsions. A child's eating two or three seeds has been reported to cause death, and eating as few as six can kill an adult. Danger can be eliminated if the seed heads are clipped off before they mature.

Oleander is an evergreen shrub growing up to 15 or 25 feet (5 or 8m) in height, with a profusion of white, pink, or red flowers in the summer. All parts of the plant, including the dried leaves, are poisonous. A child can become severely ill with vomiting, abdominal pain, and diarrhea from eating only a few leaves. Even the smoke from burning oleander brush affects some persons. The effects are similar to that of the drug digitalis and require immediate treatment by a doctor.

Because the effect of many poisonous plants is often the result of a person's allergic sensitivity rather than of the direct toxicity of the plant, it is impossible to list every plant species which can cause trouble. However, parents of small children should be aware of the more serious threats to safety.

Accidents happen. The following first-aid steps are recommended if you think your child has eaten any poisonous plant:

1. Take any poisonous matter from the child and clean out the child's mouth.
2. Call the doctor or a poison control center. Many California communities have poison control centers which can provide quick emergency information and referral, if needed. Look for poison emergency information on the first page of the telephone book.
3. If directed to do so, induce vomiting by administering syrup of ipecac. This substance, which can be purchased without a prescription at any pharmacy, should be available in all households where potential poisonings can occur.
4. If directed to take the child to the hospital, take along a sample of the poisonous plant and any vomitus collected.

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Handout: CHECK YOUR HOME SAFETY SENSE

1. Are garden tools returned to their storage racks after use?
2. Do you get help for heavy or difficult jobs?
3. Are broken walks and driveways repaired promptly?
4. Do you keep children and pets a safe distance away when operating your power mower?
5. Do you shut off the mower when cleaning, adjusting or emptying the grass catcher, and never refuel when the motor is on?
6. Are children's swings, slides and other outdoor play equipment maintained in safe condition?
7. Do you keep ladders in good shape?
8. Is the yard kept clear of broken glass, nail-studded boards and other litter?
9. Do you use extra care putting up screens when you are on a ladder.

WORKSHOP

1. Is the workshop well ventilated and work areas lighted?
2. Are paint thinners and solvents kept in metal cans?
3. Do you keep tools out of reach of small children?
4. Do you make sure extension cords are the right capacity for the wattage of the tool on which they are used? Are tools properly grounded if they are not double grounded? Are power tools disconnected or switches locked when not in use? Are power tool guards kept in place? Do you use safety glasses when drilling, sanding, or doing eye threatening work?

CHECK YOUR HOME SAFETY SENSE (Continued)

BASEMENT OR UTILITY ROOM

1. Do you know where your main gas and water valves are located and how to close them?
2. Do you know how to light the pilot light on your furnace and water heater?
3. Do you call the gas company if you suspect a leaky valve or pipe?
4. Do you know where your main electric switch is and how to turn it off?
5. Are circuit breakers labeled to identify outlets and fixtures that they protect?
6. Are the washer and drier electrically grounded?
7. Are cleaning fluids, drain openers, ammonia and similar items locked up or out of reach of small children?
8. Do you avoid using your basement, garage or attic as a dumping ground for combustible materials?

GARAGE AND DRIVEWAY

1. Is your garage well lighted with switches by the doors?
2. Is your garage in order?
3. Do you always keep the garage door open when running the car?
4. Do you inspect lift-up garage doors regularly for safety?
5. Do you check the area around the car before backing up?

LIVING ROOM, FAMILY ROOM AND BEDROOM

1. Is there good lighting in heavy traffic areas and night lights for small children and the elderly.
2. Do you keep traffic areas and exits clear?

3. Is there a lamp within easy reach of the bed?

CHECK YOUR HOME SAFETY SENSE (Continued)

4. Do you have nonskid backing on all small rugs and avoid using them at the top of stairs?
5. Is there a screen in front of the fireplace?
6. Are there plenty of wall outlets, avoiding octopus connections?
7. Do you use large, deep ashtrays in case you doze off?
8. Are firearms secure in locked racks or cabinets?
9. Do you have smoke detectors?
10. Do you have a family escape plan in case of fire?
11. Are all glass doors taped or otherwise marked?

STAIRWAYS

1. Are stairs well lighted with switches at top and bottom?
2. Are there sturdy handrails in good repair?
3. Are children's toys kept off the stairs?
4. Do you avoid using stairs as temporary storage areas?
5. Do you avoid carrying vision impairing loads up or down?

KITCHEN

1. Do you look for the UL or AGA label when you buy?
2. Are your stove and sink areas well lighted?
3. Do you wipe up spills immediately?
4. Is your kitchen wired correctly for appliances?
5. Do you make sure your hands are dry before operating electrical appliances?
6. Are you in the habit of using a step stool to reach them?

CHECK YOUR HOME SAFETY SENSE (Continued)

7. Do you turn pot handles inward, not over another burner?
8. Have you a special rack for sharp knives?
9. Do you use pot holders and make sure they are dry?
10. Are emergency phone numbers handy by the phone?
11. Do you replace cracked or frayed electrical cords?
12. Are household cleansers kept in their original containers out of reach of children?
13. Do you know that water should not be poured on a grease fire?
14. Do you shield yourself from hot steam when removing a pan lid?
15. Do you avoid wearing loose, flimsy garments around sources of flame?
16. Keep the temperature of hot water below that which can scold.

BATHROOM

1. Are there nonskid mats or decals on a tub or shower floor?
2. Do you make sure that electrical appliances are never used in the bath tub?
3. Do you have medicine clearly marked, out of reach of children?
4. Do you avoid using aerosols near open flame or when smoking?

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Handout: SUMMER HEALTH AND SAFETY HAZARDS

Heat can hurt. Small babies' sweat glands do not function quite as efficiently, at first, as those of older people. Hence, they are far more susceptible to heatstroke.

Heatstroke can happen in any hot, humid situation; there need not be direct sunlight. It can be fatal. Deaths have actually occurred when infants were left in parked cars when the temperature was in the 80's; under such circumstances, the temperature inside the car can quickly soar to 100 degrees F. or above, even if the windows are slightly open and the parking spot partly shaded.

If it is hot and humid enough outdoors to cause you acute discomfort, it is too hot for your baby. You will both be better off indoors; preferably with air conditioning.

Heat can irritate. Heat rash, also known as prickly heat, is another result of the fact that your baby's sweat glands are functioning less than perfectly. Babies often cry when they are too cold, but not when they are too hot.

If your child should develop heat rash: sponge the areas with cool water, dry and dust with cornstarch. Dress lightly.

Sun: help and hurt. Sunshine triggers the process that produces needed vitamin D for your baby's bone development. But ordinary exposure to daylight is normally sufficient for that process.

Direct sunlight, in our climatic zone, is not necessary - and your baby needs protection from the sun. All babies' skin, no matter how dark, is extremely thin and susceptible to burning; the lighter your child's skin and/or eyes, the more so.

The most dangerous period is that between about 10 AM and 2 PM when the sun is high in the sky and its rays most intense. Your baby shouldn't be exposed to that midday sun, and at other times should be in the sun for only five to ten minutes at a time. If an infant has very light hair and eyes, doctors advise no exposure to direct sunlight during the first year. When incidental sun exposure seems unavoidable, use a sunscreen.

Insect bites and stings. Aside from general alertness, it is helpful to dress your child in light, un-patterned clothing and to avoid all sweet-scented lotions.

Water. If your baby has begun to move about, even on hands and knees, and you are anywhere near water, never leave the child out of your sight, even for a few seconds.

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Assignment: An Important Errand

It's Saturday. You're taking care of your new baby while your wife is out shopping for food.

The baby is sleeping. She's been sleeping for about an hour and you've just been watching television.

Your friend Ron calls. He's found a car for you to buy. Your old car isn't running and if you can't find a new one, you won't be able to get to work on Monday. That could mean losing your job.

Ron says he can bring the car and the guy who's selling it around to your place. You tell him okay.

When Ron comes, you go out to check out the car. You drive around the block. You decide to buy it and arrange to see the guy who's selling it later. You're gone maybe ten minutes.

When you get home, your wife is there. The baby is crying. Your wife is really mad.

She says: "How could you leave the baby alone? She could have been hurt. She was lying there crying with a wet diaper and you were supposed to be taking care of her."

Discussion Questions

1. Was what you did right?
2. What should you do now?
3. Is your wife right to yell at you?

HUMAN GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

Supervision/Safety

An Important Errand

Teacher Notes

The teacher should stress 24-hour responsibility. You should not leave the baby alone without someone to look after her for any length of time for any reason. Your wife has a right to be angry. You should apologize.

HUMAN GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

Supervision/Safety

Poison	Location	Prevention
Detergents, bleach, fabric softener	Laundry room	Store in a high, out-of-sight place. Keep in a locked place if the child is a climber.
Sprays, polishes, cleaning substances.	Cleaning cupboard	Use safety lids on bottles. Keep bottles in a locked cupboard high and out of sight of children.
Flavorings, salts,	Kitchen	Store high and out of the sight of children.
Alcoholic beverages	Kitchen	Store high and out of the sight of children
Medicines (aspirin is a number one cause of accidents due to poisoning), cosmetics, aerosols rubbing alcohol, disinfectants, laxatives, vitamins (especially A and D), eye medicines.	Bathroom	Use safety kids. Keep medicine locked up. Do not take medicine While children are watching; they imitate.
Poisonous sprays, baits	Garage, basement or yard	Store in a high locked cupboard.
Fertilizers, paints, antifreeze, lighter fluids, insecticides, gasoline		Keep in the original container.
Alcohol, plants	Living or family room	Check to see whether plants are poisonous before purchasing them. Put away all alcoholic beverages before leaving the room.